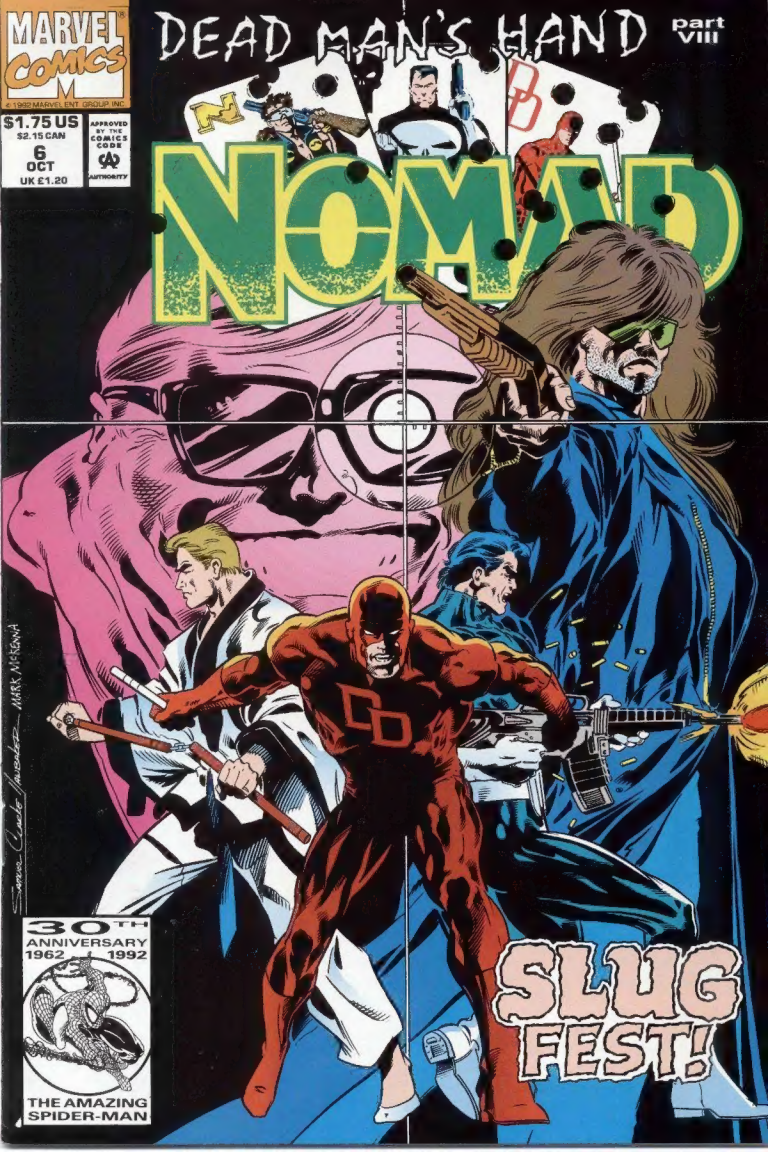
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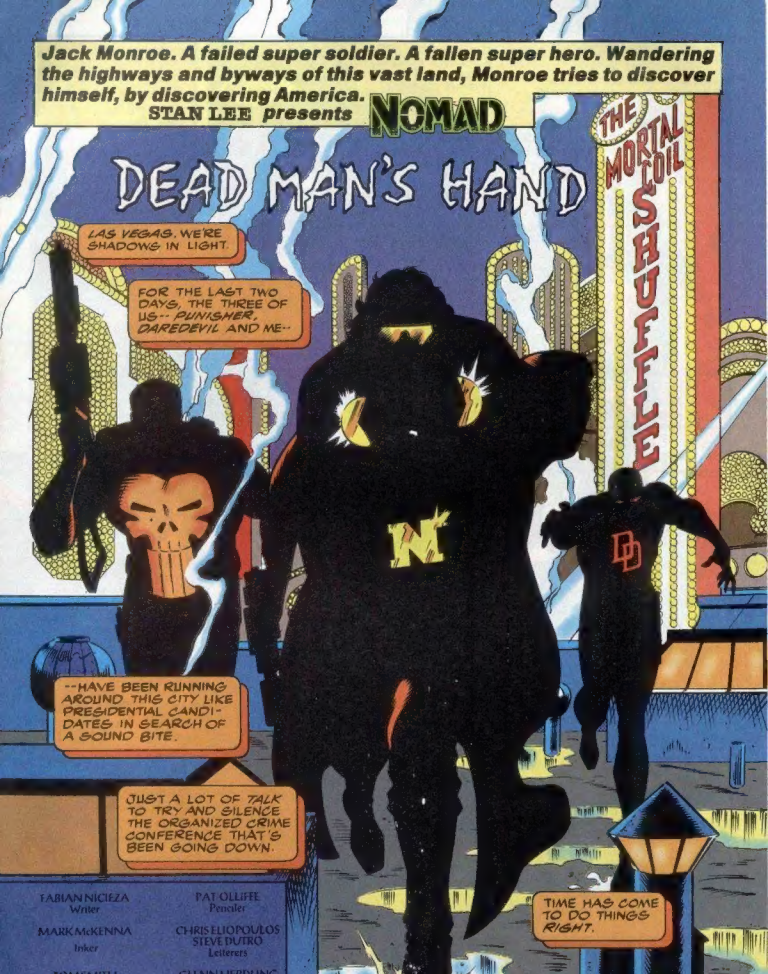
DEAD MAN'S HAND part VIII
NOMAD
SLUG FEST!
30TH ANNIVERSARY 1962 1992
THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN



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WE'VE JOINED FORCES TO TAKE THE PLAYERS IN THIS GAME DOWN.
THE DICE ARE BEING ROLLED AT THE PALANTINE CASINO.
SHSHSH
TCHK
PUNISHER AND DAREDON'T GET ALONG. OPPOSITE SIDES OF THE SAME COIN, I GUESS.
HUMPH.
HUMPH.
AND WHERE DOES JACK MONROE FIT IN, THEN?
SOMEWHERE ALONG THE EDGE, SPINNING 'ROUND AND 'ROUND--
--WAITING TO SEE WHETHER I COME UP HEADS OR TAILS.
ping
GUESS IT'S TIME TO FLIP THE COIN AND FIND OUT.

THE HOTEL'S OWNED BY THE SECRET EMPIRE, SO EXPECT MAJOR RESISTANCE FROM THEM.
WE WORK OUR WAY FROM THE BOTTOM UP.
NUMBER 23--OPEN UP!
TURN ON THE NEWS! IT'S ALL HIT THE FAN!
DAREDEVIL AND PUNISHER ARE BOTH IN VEGAS!
PING
THEY'RE COMING..
..FOR SURE--?
FOR SURE.

THOK
ACTION TO THE RIGHT--!
SMOOTH.
LET'S LIGHT UP THE NIGHT!
THOK

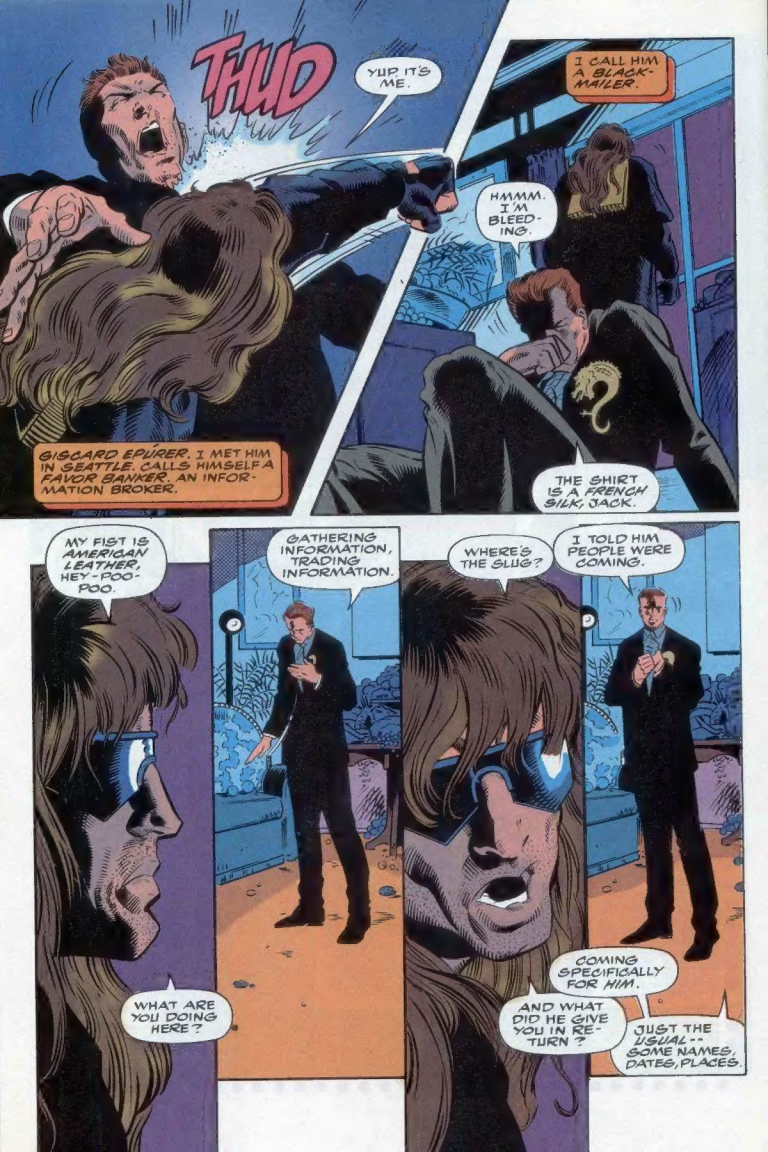
WE WADE INTO THEM AS IF IT'S A NEED AS MUCH AS A DESIRE.
OUT OF THE CORNER OF MY EYE I WATCH DAREDEVIL'S MOVES.
PRECISE. GRACEFUL. INFLICTING JUST ENOUGH DAMAGE TO PUT THE EMPIRE THUGS DOWN WITHOUT PUTTING THEM IN A MORGUE.
48

AND PUNISHER?
HE'S BULLETS AND SWEAT.
HIS JOB IS TO MAKE SURE HE NEVER HAS TO WASTE AMMO ON SOMEONE HE FIRES AT AGAIN.
DAREDEVIL IS REPULSED BY WHAT THE PUNISHER DOES.
BUT THE DEVIL HAS TO KNOW THERE'S A SENSE OF--FINALITY--TO PUNNY'S METHODS.
COLD. PRECISE. REMORSELESS.
DOES IT EAT AWAY AT HIM--THAT HIS OWN METHODS--
--COMPASSIONATE THOUGH THEY ARE--
--ARE FLAWED IF YOU LOOK AT THEM LOGICALLY AND NOT EMOTIONALLY?

I'M THINKING TOO MUCH. I HAVE A JOB TO DO.
I TOOK THE ELEVATORS OUT.
WE WORK OUR WAY UP, FLUSHING THE MAGGOTS TO THE ROOFTOP.
THEN WE SHOW THEM THE EDGE... AND PUSH.
IT'S NOT GOING TO BE QUITE THAT EASY, PUNISHER!
VENGEANCE ISN'T JUSTICE -- AND I'M STICKING ON YOU LIKE A WET BATHING SUIT ON A HOT CAR SEAT TO MAKE SURE YOU REMEMBER THAT!
I GOT SOMETHING I HAVE TO TAKE CARE OF FIRST.
THERE'S A PERSONAL STAKE I HAVE IN ONE OF THE PLAYERS.
ONCE I CALL MY MARKER DUE, I'LL JOIN YOU TOPSIDE.

THIS IS IT. NO NOISE. NO MOVEMENT. NOBODY HOME ?
SUITES 22A-D
FAT PIG NEEDS THAT MUCH SPACE FOR HIS STOMACH ALONE.
ACCORDING TO THE INFO WE DRAGGED OUT OF TOMBSTONE'S MEN, THE SLUG AND HIS CREW ARE TAKING UP THE ENTIRE SUITE OF ROOMS.
KAPHOOM
WHAT'S IT GOING TO BE, JACK? THE SNAKE OR THE BULL ?
A BULL FOR A COW.
♫ULYSSES.. WHERE ARE YOU ?♫
NOTHING, BUT WHOEVER WAS HERE MADE A QUICK EXIT.
AND FROM THE SHEER AMOUNT OF RED MEAT AND WINE, ONE GUESS WHO THAT SOMEONE WAS.
SHINK
UH--?

SHAK
THAK
WHO THE S#@! IS THIS?!
THWUK
WAIT--THE STYLE--THRUST OF THE KICK--
HEY-POO-POO?
JACK? IS THAT YOU?
I COULDN'T TELL IN THE DARK--AND WITHOUT YOUR CHILD, BUCKY, I COULD NOT MARK YOUR SCENT...


THUD
YUP IT'S ME.
I CALL HIM A BLACK-MAILER.
HMMM. I'M BLEEDING.
GISCARD EPURER. I MET HIM IN SEATTLE. CALLS HIMSELF A FAVOR BANKER. AN INFORMATION BROKER.
THE SHIRT IS A FRENCH SILK, JACK.
MY FIST IS AMERICAN LEATHER, HEY-POO-POO.
GATHERING INFORMATION, TRADING INFORMATION.
WHERE'S THE SLUG?
I TOLD HIM PEOPLE WERE COMING.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
COMING SPECIFICALLY FOR HIM.
AND WHAT DID HE GIVE YOU IN RETURN?
JUST THE USUAL-- SOME NAMES, DATES, PLACES.

THIS WON'T STOP ME FROM GETTING TO HIM.
I WOULD RATHER NOT SEE YOU MAKE THIS MISTAKE, JACK.
PAPERWORK WILL BE SHUFFLED, BUT YOUR RECORD WILL BE DIRTIER THAN EVER--
--IN HERE-- WHERE IT COUNTS.
HOW DO YOU KNOW? AND WHAT DO YOU CARE?
--MY RECORD WIPED CLEAN IN EXCHANGE FOR A SLUG'S LIFE
--TRADING ONE FAVOR FOR ANOTHER--
WHAT? I'M JUST DOING WHAT YOU'RE SO GOOD AT--
I WAS GIVEN A CHOICE ONE TIME, JACK... MANY YEARS AGO..
.. DO SOMETHING TO SOMEONE AND GET SOMETHING FROM SOMEONE.
IT SEEMED AN EASY CHOICE-- BUT ONCE DONE, IT CAN NEVER BE UNDONE.
SO YOU JUST KEEP PILING ONE FAVOR ON TOP OF ANOTHER-- HOPING THAT IT WILL EVENTUALLY EVEN ITSELF OUT.
AND REALIZING, LITTLE BY LITTLE, THAT IT NEVER-- NEVER-- WILL...
THE CHOICE IS YOURS, JACK, AS IT WAS MINE
THINK OF THE MORAL TAFFY I AM ASKING YOU TO CHEW ON NOT AS A FAVOR... JUST ADVICE... FROM A FRIEND.

AS IF I NEEDED A LECTURE FROM PURGATORY RIGHT NOW.
WHAT ABOUT THE DEVIL AND PUNISHER? WHAT SHADES OF GRAY ARE THEY HIDING?
OR IS EVERYTHING CLEAR-CUT FOR THEM?
KCHAK
ALWAYS KNOWING WHICH DOOR LEADS TO THE RIGHT PATH?
GOOD EVENING, GENTLEMEN.
THOUGH I PRESUME ONLY ONE HALF OF THAT IDENTIFICATION CAN BEAR CLOSER SCRUTINY.
I AM THE WORD.
AND YOU ARE THE DEED, ARE YOU NOT?
THE ONES WHO HAVE BROUGHT MY CAREFULLY ORCHESTRATED MEETING TO A RATHER ABRUPT HALT
A TOAST TO YOUR DEEDS THEN, HONORABLE WARRIORS

WHO WAS REALLY RUNNING THIS MEETING?
MY EMPLOYER WOULD PREFER TO MAINTAIN HIS ANONYMITY.
HOW PROUD HE MUST BE OF THE JOB YOU DID HERE
NO ACTUALLY HE IS NOT
STOP!!
KCHIK
NO LICKING YOUR HANDS.
THE WINE IS POISONED, RIGHT?
INTERESTING HEALTH PLAN YOUR EMPLOYER HAS.

YOU'RE SO AFRAID OF THIS GUY THAT YOU'RE WILLING TO KILL YOURSELF ?
TELL US WHAT WE WANT TO KNOW-- AND I'LL BE HAPPY TO OBLIGE YOU!
UNFORTUNATELY, I BELIEVE YOU WILL BE PREOCCUPIED WITH MORE PRESSING MATTERS..
PUNISHER..
-DOWN!
FWISH
FWISH
FWISH
FWISH
FWISH

NINJAS ?
I HATE NINJAS
TCHAK
THEY'RE MEMBERS OF THE HAND. VERY NASTY.
AND THIS PART YOU'LL LOVE-- THEY MAY NOT EVEN BE ALIVE !
WE NEED MORE ROOM TO MANEUVER AGAINST THEM!
WORK YOUR WAY UP TO THE ROOF!
GOOD.
THEN YOU WON'T MIND IF I KILL THEM.

TK
THOK
SHIK
TCHIK TOW
LOOK FOR THEIR JONIN -- THEIR LEADER--
-- TAKE HIM DOWN AND IT'S LIKE SEVERING THE HEAD FROM THE BODY
THE HEAD OF THE HAND?

JUST FIND HIM.
NEVER MIND.
PPPPRRRRRAAPPPTTTT
NICE SMELL. BARBECUED NINJAS?
YOU KNOW THESE CLOWNS?
RAN INTO A COUPLE OF THEM BEFORE
WITH THEIR JONIN DEAD, THEY TEND TO DISCORPORATE.
FOR THE LIFE OF ME, I'LL NEVER UNDERSTAND HOW, THOUGH.

DID YOU TAKE CARE OF YOUR PERSONAL BUSINESS?
NOT QUITE.
I CAME TO VEGAS TO WIPE MY SLATE CLEAN.
IF I TAKE OUT THE MIAMI CRIME-LORD CALLED THE SLUG--
-- THEN THE SUITS AND TIES PRESS "ERASE" ON MY FILE.
I'VE BEEN AFTER LUGMAN FOR YEARS.
LET'S FIND HIM AND TAKE CARE OF IT THEN.
WAIT -- THE GOVERNMENT -- OR PEOPLE CLAIMING TO REPRESENT THE GOVERMENT --
-- SANCTION A MURDER, AND YOU SAY, "LET'S TAKE CARE OF IT"?
WHAT DO YOU SUGGEST?
THE DEVIL ISN'T GOING TO BECOME PARTY TO MURDER..
BUT HE ALSO CAN'T STOP ME FROM DOING IT UNLESS I GET THE OPPORTUNITY.
ALL WE HAVE TO DO NOW IS FIND THE LARGEST TRUCK ON THE ROAD IN VEGAS.
THE SLUG'LL BE INSIDE THAT TRUCK
LET'S TAKE CARE OF IT

AND SINCE THERE AREN'T THAT MANY ROADS OUT OF VEGAS...
THE TRUCK ISN'T HARD TO CATCH UP TO.
MORE FOOD!
:MRRFF:
ERNESTO!
:CHOMP:
I'M A BUNDLE OF NERVES!
YOU KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS!
:GLORFF:
MORE FOOD!!
BOOM
WHAT HAPPENED?
SKR
THUD
GLMM

TIME FOR DESSERT.
KRAK
SLIK
THWT
SLUG.
I HAVE SOMETHING FOR YOU TO CHEW ON.
WHY--ARE YOU--DOING THIS--?

GOOD QUESTION.
BECAUSE ME--
--BECAUSE I--
--I--
--IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT WHAT I GET OUT OF IT--
--THIS SCUM DEALS DRUGS, STEALS, LIES--
--PERVERTS THE ENTIRE SYSTEM TO FILL HIS OWN FAT BELLY--
WHO ARE YOU? WHO ARE YOU WORKING FOR?
YOU DON'T KNOW?
YOU DON'T REMEMBER ME?
LISTEN -- WHATEVER YOU'RE GETTING PAID-- I'LL DOUBLE IT! WHATEVER YOU'RE GETTING OFFERED -- I CAN GO ONE BETTER!
ONE BETTER THAN FREEDOM? ONE BETTER THAN HOPE?

PLEASE
THINK ABOUT WHAT YOU'RE GOING TO DO!
HOW DOES THIS SOLVE YOUR PROBLEMS?
HOW DOES IT WIPE CLEAN WHATEVER YOU DID IN THE PAST?
WILL IT MAKE LIFE EASIER FOR YOU IN THE FUTURE?
IT'S THE ONLY ANSWER!
THE ONE YOU TAKE OUT TODAY WON'T HURT ANY-ONE TOMORROW!
FINISH HIM OFF! LET'S GET ON WITH IT!
BOTH OF THEM?
NEITHER OF THEM?
WHAT'S IT GOING TO BE, JACK?
WHO'S RIGHT?

KAPOW
THE WHITE PICKET FENCE DOESN'T LOOK GOOD SPLATTERED IN BLOOD.
OH, @%#$ THIS! I'LL FINISH THE PIG OFF!!
THE SLUG DIDN'T EVEN REMEMBER ME.
HOW AM I EVER GOING TO FIND IF WHERE I'M GOING IF WHERE I'VE BEEN IS SO SCREWED UP?
WHO MOPS ME UP?
NO!
KLIK
WHO SWEEPS THE DUST AND COBWEBS OFF ME?
WHO KEEPS ME CLEAN?
WHO?
HMFF.
CARTRIDGE IS EMPTY.
MANIAC...
LET'S GO MOP THE REST OF THIS UP.
DEAD MAN'S HAND CONCLUDES IN PUNISHER WAR JOURNAL #48!

ONE FOR THE ROAD

GLENN HERDLING: EDITOR — HECTOR COLLAZO: SIDEKICK

C/O MARVEL COMICS — 387 PARK AVE. SOUTH — NEW YORK, NEW YORK — 10016

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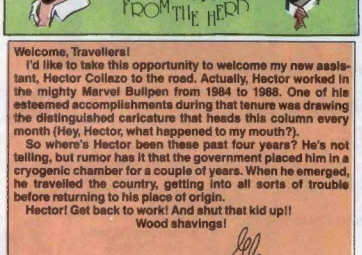

Welcome, Travellers!

I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome my new assistant, Hector Collazo to the road. Actually, Hector worked in the mighty Marvel Bullpen from 1984 to 1988. One of his esteemed accomplishments during that tenure was drawing the distinguished caricature that heads this column every month (Hey, Hector, what happened to my mouth?).

So where's Hector been these past four years? He's not telling, but rumor has it that the government placed him in a cryogenic chamber for a couple of years. When he emerged, he travelled the country, getting into all sorts of trouble before returning to his place of origin.

Hector! Get back to work! And shut that kid up!!

Wood shavings!

Glenn

Dear Glenn and Pat,

I know that Mike Lackey is now the assistant editor for NOMAD, and I know that Pat Garrahy is now Ralph Macchio's assistant editor. But what I don't know is what the heck happened in Glenn's office that would cause such a ruckus in the pages of NOMAD. C'mon guys, you were best buddies in issue #1, remember? (You know, the "rent-a-cops" that Jack beat up!) Then along came issue #2, and Pat left. So what is "the real reason Pat left Glenn for Ralf?" Have you two kissed and made up yet?

But I'm not done yet! It looks like Fabian doesn't like Pat Garrahy either! In issue #3, Fabian wrote that the "Garrahy" hotel was some crummy little dive. C'mon guys, give us the real dirt behind the scenes! What gives?

Chris Matthys
(Address withheld by request)

The "real reason" Pat left Glenn for Ralf was that the "Godfather" of comics (Tom DeFalco) made Pat an offer that he couldn't refuse! He offered him the assistant editor position on Pat's favorite title--THE FANTASTIC FOUR. You'll also notice that Mike Lackey is no longer with Glenn. It's not that Glenn is hard to work with--he just has a bad case of B.O.!

Dear Sirs,

To say that I have been very impressed with this series thus far would be a colossal understatement. Of the twenty-six plus Marvel's I regularly read, NOMAD is among the few for which I have nothing but praise. While I have enjoyed Mr. Nicieza's work on other titles, nothing compares to the work that he does on this one. From animal rights to the confrontation between Nomad and USAgent, each issue has been superbly handled. To top it off, the characterizations are some of the best I have seen in quite a long while. As for the excellent artwork by Hawbaker and McKenna, what can I say that I haven't already? Their work has the perfect feel for this title. It captures the essence of the characters and presents them in such ways that is very appreciated. All I can say is that I hope they stay with the series for the duration.

Marson Fedrick
P.O. Box 514
Ellisville, MS 39437

As you know by now, Marson, Clarke is taking a sabbatical to work on the speed at which he produces his sensational art. But we know you won't be disappointed with pulse-pounding Pat Olliffe's provocative pencils!

Dear Glenn, Pat, Fabian, Clarke, Mark, Chris, Joe, and Tom,

I don't know what to say, I'm speechless. I have all four issues of the Nomad limited series. I love all four. I think that Nomad is a great character. I just never thought that NOMAD would become a regular title, but boy am I glad it has!

I've read the first issue, and I must say that I like it. The creative team did a wonderful job on it. The art and the story are both great. I also love the fold out wanted poster of Nomad. Any chance of it being made into a real poster? I hope the creative team can keep up the great work. I would like to see NOMAD stay around for quite a while. A long while!

I picked up issue #2 this weekend, but I haven't read it yet. I plan to tomorrow. So, who can we look forward to seeing in future issues of NOMAD? The Punisher maybe? Or maybe someone like Daredevil, or even Wolverine?

John Gilliland
P.O. Box 731
Long Beach, NC 28465

It's an uncanny occurrence that everyone expected to see the Punisher and Daredevil in these pages. Do you think we might have brought that one about a little too soon? Heck, we could have waited for an anniversary event before bringing you what you asked for! Oh well, there's always Wolverine...

Yo No Name,

Jon Bon Jovi drops out of the spotlight--Nomad appears. Hmmm, coincidence? I don't know. They sure look alike, and Nomad? Yeah, he's a cowboy, and he's wanted--DEAD OR ALIVE... Oh, sorry, I got carried away!

But seriously, the art's rad, the stories are rad--heck the only thing missing is Jack's forehead. Do you think he'll have some time to get his hair trimmed sometime? Don't get me wrong, long hair is cool. I'm a long-hair, but I have a forehead. A man's got to have a forehead! Anyway, keep up the great work!!!

Jon Critter
2500 Queen St.
Apt. B
Bellingham, WA 98226

We hear that Jack's hiding a bad case of acne on his forehead. There's no way we're going to cut his hair now, because without it, the gratuitous babes just wouldn't hang around!

"Dead Man's Hand" folds in PUNISHER WAR JOURNAL #48, on sale in three weeks. Then return here NEXT ISSUE when Nomad wanders into the Infinity War! Wait a minute — save your protests about Nomad becoming embroiled in cosmic affairs. Jack will *not* confront his evil doppleganger. Instead, he will tackle the terrible twin of another trenchcoated champion who always has an ace up his sleeve!